

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-7 (canceled)

Claim 8 (previously presented): An apparatus comprising:

a master system including: a master memory and a storage mechanism for storing a first remote boot image and a second remote boot image;

a first slave system including: a first memory and a first programmable interface coupled to the master system, the first programmable interface including a first system controller; and

a second slave system including: a second memory and a second programmable interface coupled to the master system, the second programmable interface including a second system controller;

wherein the master system is configured to perform one or more operations to identify one or more characteristics of each of the first slave system and the second slave system after the master system is booted and the first and second system controllers are released by the master system, said operations including interrogating the first and second slave systems to identify their respective said characteristics; wherein the master system is configured to determine that the first remote boot image should be used for the first slave system in response to said interrogation of the first slave system and based on said identified characteristics of the first slave system, and to update the first programmable interface to cause the first slave system to retrieve the first remote boot image and to boot from said retrieved first remote boot image; and wherein the master system is configured to determine that the second remote boot image should be used for the second slave system in response to said interrogation of the second slave system and based on said identified characteristics of the second slave system,

and to update the second programmable interface to cause the second slave system to retrieve the second remote boot image and to boot from said retrieved second remote boot image.

Claim 9-12 canceled

Claim 13 (previously presented): A method performed in an apparatus including a master system communicatively coupled to a slave system, the master system including a master processor, a master memory associated with the master processor, a master system controller, and a storage mechanism configured to store information, the information including a plurality of remote boot images; the slave system including a slave processor, a slave controller and a memory associated with the slave processor; the method comprising:

the master system performing one or more operations to interrogate the slave system to identify one or more characteristics of the slave system, and to determine a boot image from the plurality of remote boot images based on said one or more characteristics identified during the interrogation operation;

the slave controller sending a boot request to the master system controller;

the master system controller, in response to the boot request, causing the boot image determined based on said one or more characteristics identified during the interrogation operation to be retrieved from the storage mechanism and communicated to the slave controller;

the slave controller relaying the boot image to the slave processor or the memory associated with the slave processor; and

the slave processor booting with the boot image determined by the master system based on said one or more characteristics identified during the interrogation operation.

Claims 14-30 (canceled)

Claim 31 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 8, wherein said one or more characteristics include its type.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 31, wherein said one or more characteristics include its version.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The method of claim 13, wherein said one or more characteristics include its type or version.

Claim 34 (canceled)

Claim 35 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 8, wherein said one or more characteristics include its version.

Claim 36 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the master system is coupled to the first and second slave systems via a single bus.

Claim 37 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the first programmable interface is configured to translate an original boot address to a remote boot address for accessing the first remote boot image.

Claim 38 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the first slave system includes a boot ROM; and wherein the original boot address refers to a location in the boot ROM for retrieving a locally stored boot image within the first slave system.

Claim 39 (previously presented): The method of claim 13, wherein the master system, in response to said determining the boot image from the plurality of remote boot images based on said one more characteristics identified during the interrogation operation, causes the slave system to request the boot image determined by the master system based on said one or more characteristics identified during the interrogation operation.

Claim 40 (previously presented): The method of claim 13, wherein said operation of the slave controller sending the boot request to the master controller includes the slave controller translating an original boot address to a remote boot address for accessing the boot image determined based on said one or more characteristics identified during the interrogation operation to be retrieved.

Claim 41 (previously presented): The method of claim 40, wherein the slave system includes a boot ROM; and wherein the original boot address refers to a location in the boot ROM.

Claim 42 (previously presented): The method of claim 13, wherein said one or more characteristics include its type.

Claim 43 (previously presented): The method of claim 42, wherein said one or more characteristics include its version.

Claim 44 (previously presented): The method of claim 13, wherein said one or more characteristics include its version.

Claim 45 (previously presented): An apparatus comprising:  
a master system; and  
a slave system including: a memory and a programmable interface coupled to the master system, the programmable interface including a system controller;  
wherein the master system includes: a master memory, a storage mechanism for storing a plurality of remote boot images, the plurality of remote boot images including a remote boot image; means for performing one or more operations to identify one or more characteristics of the slave system, said operations including interrogating the slave system to identify its respective said one or more characteristics; means for determining that the remote boot image from the plurality of remote boot images should be used for the slave system in response to said interrogation of the slave system and based on said identified characteristics of the slave system; and means for updating the programmable interface of the slave system to cause the slave system to retrieve and boot from the remote boot image.

Claim 46 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the programmable interface includes means for translating an original boot address to a remote boot address for accessing the remote boot image.

Claim 47 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 46, wherein the slave system includes a boot ROM; and wherein the original boot address refers to a location in the boot ROM for retrieving a locally stored boot image within the slave system.

Claim 48 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 46, wherein said means for updating the programmable interface includes means for programming the translation of the original boot address to the remote boot address.

Claim 49 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 45, wherein said one or more characteristics include its type.

Claim 50 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 49, wherein said one or more characteristics include its version.

Claim 51 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 45, wherein said one or more characteristics include its version.

Claim 52 (new): An apparatus comprising:

a master system including: a master memory and a storage mechanism for storing a first remote boot image;

a first slave system including: a first memory and a first programmable interface coupled to the master system, the first programmable interface including a first system controller; and

wherein the master system is configured to perform one or more operations to identify one or more characteristics of the first slave system after the master system is booted and the first controller is released by the master system, said operations including interrogating the first slave system to identify their respective said characteristics; wherein the master system is configured to determine that the first remote boot image should be used for the first slave system in response to said interrogation of the first slave system and based on said identified characteristics of the first slave system, and to update the first programmable interface to cause the first slave system to retrieve the first remote boot image and to boot from said retrieved first remote boot image.

Claim 53 (new): The apparatus of claim 52, wherein said one or more characteristics include its type.

Claim 54 (new): The apparatus of claim 53, wherein said one or more characteristics include its version.

Claim 55 (new): The apparatus of claim 52, wherein said one or more characteristics include its version.

Claim 56 (new): The apparatus of claim 52, wherein the first programmable interface is configured to translate an original boot address to a remote boot address for accessing the first remote boot image.

Claim 57 (new): The apparatus of claim 56, wherein the first slave system includes a boot ROM; and wherein the original boot address refers to a location in the boot ROM for retrieving a locally stored boot image within the first slave system.